DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 174 915 CG 013 706

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TITLE Humanistic Counseling of Bilingual Students: A Continuous Process K - 12.
PUB DATE [76]
NOTE 30p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Affective Behavior; *Bilingual Students; Cocounseling; *Cognitive Development; *Counseling Effectiveness; Cross Cultural Training; *Elementary Secondary Education; *Humanistic Education; *Mexican Americans; Multicultural Education; Spanish Speaking

ABSTRACT

Field independence, traditions and assertiveness of counselors and Latino students are explored to help counselors function more effectively with Latino students. Latino students can be taught to be bicognitive, biaffective, and assertive. A model is offered to assist counselors in this effort. Six examples of counseling methods, using teacher-counselor teams, are presented and analyzed. Suggestions are offered for strong, innovative counseling teams to serve students. (Author/BEF)

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HUMANISTIC COUNSELING OF BILINGUAL STUDENTS:

A CONTINUOUS PROCESS K - 12

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Since humanistic psychology became a defined area of psychology back in the 1940's, many books and articles have been written about a wide range of topics which try to demonstrate how this concept can be implemented into the counseling process. The discipline of psychology has been open to these new ideas and concepts; however educational institutions have been much slower to change their attitudes about what education is or how we change people through the education process. Aspy (1972) suggests "that we must seek to bring the feeling part of man more on a par with the thinking part of man; the affective domain in psychology must assume as much importance as the cognitive domain" (p.2).

Gazda (1971) supports this same idea by suggesting "If educators are to use the classrooms of the early shcool years and, for that matter throughout all formal education through at least grade twelve, to teach self-understanding, self-worth, and ways of relating to others in a healthy manner, it will require a formal program that is a regular part of the curriculum" (p.61). Most of us are painfully aware that what Gazda suggests is difficult at best, in most school environments. Therefore, the authors will present a model which can be used by counselors as well as other school personnel to incorporate more understanding of the needs of working with Latino students. The authors suggest that this model can be applicable to many linguistic or culturally distinct students.

Cognitive/Affective Fields

As counselors, we have studied the cognition of students, but we have seldom studied the cognition of culturally distinct students. This paper will utilize the cognitive styles developed by Witkin et al., with modifications by Ramirez and Castaneda, as a model for counseling Latino students.

Witkin (1962) defines cognitive styles as "our typical ways of processing information, regardless of whether the information has its primary source in the world outside or within ourselves" (p.14). Ramirez and Castaneda (1974) suggest that Mexican-American (and other Latino) students can be taught to be bicognitive, "...because functioning effectively in two cognitive styles allows them to participate more fully in both the Mexican-American and mainstream American cultures, helping them to achieve a bicultural identity" (p.151).

The first part of this model addresses the concept of field independence/sensitive as a cognitive/affective mode of processing information. Witkin uses the term "field dependence". Ramirez and Castaneda (1974) use the "sensitive" term instead of dependence" because "dependence" can be interpreted as a dependent personality. The term dependence has acquired many negative connotations, whereas the word sensitive better describes the behavior of people with this cognitive style. Therefore, the authors encourage the use of the terms field independent and field sensitive.

Witkin (1962) describes characteristics of people in both fields when he states, "field dependent people are more attentive than field independent people to social cues provided by others. For example, ...they prefer interpersonal situations which involve them with others, in contrast to field independent people who prefer more solitary, impersonal situations" (p.16). Field dependent people have been described in such terms as: "...interested in people, want to help others, have concern for others, socially outgoing" (p.16). Descriptions more commonly applied to field independent people have included: "...concerned with ideas and principles rather than people, not interested in humanitarian activities" (p.16). Other scholars have labeled similar concepts of cognitive styles as analytical and rational or the

use of right and left cerebral hemispheres.

Ramirez and Castaneda suggest that Mexican-American (Latino) children and women tend to be more field sensitive in cognitive style, whereas Anglo-American male children are more likely to be field independent. It must be noted that people do not operate in one field or another all the time. In fact, people operate in a field depending on a particular situation or motivation. For example, people of both fields become medical doctors. However, field sensitive persons may become general practioners, while field independent persons are more likely to become medical researchers or neurosurgeons. Actually, fields overlap. People function in the field where they are most comfortable in a given situation.

(Diagram 1)

It is more advantageous to be able to function in different fields at different times. One's experiences effect behavior which is culturally defined in different ways. Ability to function effectively in different fields is learned and therefore it can be related to experience and practice. Functioning effectively in both the independent and sensitive fields produces a bicognitive/biaffective individual.

An Individual's Cultural Tradition

Ramirez and Castaneda (1974) have defined the Mexican Americans (Latinos) as Traditional if they have a strong identification with family, community, ethnic group and members of the extended family, and are cooperative. The traditional Latino is predominantly field sensitive. The Duotraditional Mexican-Americans (Latinos) are usually from a semi-urban community, are ethnically heterogeneous and has moderate ties with families

in the community. This group's cognition is mixed, but more toward the field independent. The Atraditional Mexican-Americans (Latinos) are from an urban community, distant from a barrio, they comprise a minority, have few family ties in the community, and English is the primary language. This group is assimilated into the community at large and is predominantly field independent. (For a further explanation of fields and traditions, refer to Ramirez and Castaneda, 1974).

The above applies to the tradition of a person in relation to the field of that person. The authors of this paper maintain that people do not necessarily remain in a particular cultural tradition all their life. In reality, the tradition of an individual is usually in a state of transition as is shown below.

(Diagram 2)

Example: People arrive in the United States from Mexico or Puerto Rico and are traditional (star 1). As they live in this country and attend school, they progress to the right toward the 2nd or 3rd stars. As individuals become educated and, perhaps acculturated, they may progress further to the right of the continuum toward the 5th or 6th stars. However, just as individuals move to the right of the continuum they can also move to the left and select the tradition in which they feel most comfortable. The person can remain in any tradition or fluxuate between traditions dictated by life situations. The goal of knowing the tradition of the Latino is to help the students know where they are in relation to their tradition and to feel comfortable in moving between traditions depending on the situation. Hence being able to function biculturally and understanding what

that means.

Knowing the field and tradition of Latino students can give the counselor clues as to the most effective techniques to be used with Latino students. It is important that counselors know their students, but it is equally important that counselors know themselves! Counselors must know their own field and tradition as Witkin has found that students and teachers matched in cognitive styles "like" each other better than teachers and students who are opposites. It is obvious, then, that matching counselors and students is the objective to facilitate positive counseling of Latino students. Moreover, if counselors understand their own tradition and field, and those of their students, then they will not assume that all Latinos are of the same field and tradition as themselves. It can be generalized from Witkin, Ramirez and Castaneda, that female counselors might be more effective with women and minority students, while white, male counselors may be more effective with white, male students. This happens because women are more field sensitive while white men are more field independent.

In carring out any kind of guidance program, counselors must be aware of not only traditional counseling methods, but also the historical practices of some Latinos. Awareness of and respect for historical counseling practices is an integral part of understanding and working with Latinos. Some of the people relyed upon by Latinos are/were: "curanderos" (a healer but not an M.D.), extended family, and clergy.

Bicognitive development in students has many implications for counseling Latinos. Bilingualism implies functioning in two languages, therefore, bicognition suggests that thought processes occur in two modes. From the

research cited above it is apparent that if students learn in two cognitive fields with one being the dominant field than affective functioning also develops in two different modes, one of which is dominant. Ansubel and Sullivan (1970) suggest that there is a cognitive aspect to values and moral behavior which is influenced by intelligence and moral knowledge. This implies that counselors should conduct counseling from the cognitive as well as affective perspective.

Communication Styles

In relation to bicognitive/biaffective development, "choice" of learning/behaving styles is a key word. Choice is also a key word for assertive behavior. If we help students learn how to behave, feel, and conceptualize in many diffternt ways, then we teach them how to be bi-cognitive and biaffective. Assertive behavior/communication is one way of developing positive biaffective modes of behavior in students.

Assertive behavior/communication has five basic tenants: 1) Assertive communciation is open, honest and direct; 2) Assertive communication lies on a continuum from passive to aggressive, with assertive behavior being the goal; 3) Assertive communication grants all individuals certain basic human rights; the right to stand up for their own feelings and beliefs without stepping on the rights of others and without giving up their rights to someone else; 4) Assertive individuals take responsibility for their actions and feelings, always realizing that there are behavioral/communication choices in each situation; and 5) All persons, no matter what age or intellectual level, are treated with respect for they are human beings. (For furhter information on assertive communication refer to Alberti and Emmons, 1971.)

It must be stated that these rules for assertive communication are guidelines geared to the middle-class Anglo culture. Cultural differences in behavior must be understood, especially when working with traditional Latinos. For instance: with traditional Lations, direct eye contact with an elder may be taken as a sign of disrespect instead of openness. Other cultural differences which might be offensive include voice tone and volume, how close one stands to another person and how gestures are used.

The basis of assertive communication is that it focuses on honest and direct communication while minimizing game playing and defensive behavoir, which leads to better understanding between the two people communicating. We have defined for this paper behaviors as passive, aggressive and assertive. Using pictorial circles to include what has been said, the continuum is shown below (part C). Again, it ought to be said that a person does not always react in one mode or another all the time. A person can be passive in one situation and aggressive in another. However, consistant assertive communication is the desired style.

Counseling Model

This paper has discussed fields, traditions, and assertiveness of counselors and students in the hope that this information will help counselors function effectively in counseling situations with Latino students. The authors are convinced that the Latino student ought to be taught to be bicognitive, biaffective and assertive, and to this end the following model is presented to illustrate the mixing of the parts to create the whole.

(Diagram 3)

Model Application - A continuous Process K-12

Historically, counseling services have not been provided for elementary school students. Although a few programs do exist, most of the guidance responsibilities have traditionally been left to the teachers and principals. Many problems that arise in the classroom have a basis in the difference of perceptions of teachers, counselors and students because of differing cultural backgrounds. Nine-Curt (1976 a) makes some astute observations in this area, "All cultures are neither superior nor inferior to others: they are simply different" (p.4). She goes on to state that, "Culture is the way of life of a people, the sum of their learned behavior, patterns, attitudes and material things" (p.4).

Nine-Curt (1976 b) also lists five cultural principles which, if practiced by counselors and other school personnel in conjunction with the above model, may correct problems that have existed in the past with culturally different students. She suggests that, first, it is extremely important that counselors are aware of and accept their own ethnic, historical, and cultural background and the ethnic, historical and cultural backgrounds of others. Second, counselors must be aware of their own particular communication behavior and the communication behavior of others. Third, counselors must learn the skill of "switching cultural channels" in order to establish an acceptable, nonoffensive, productive relationship with students of other cultures. Fourth, counselors should be open to communication systems which they may not have noticed before. Fifth, counselors should be aware of and practice one-to-one personal relationships with each student, making them culture specific.

As demonstrated by the above model, the goal of the counseling process

with Latinos is to help them become bicognitive, biaffective, duotraditional and assertive. In high schools, teachers instruct students for a limited time each day and counselors usually see the students only two or three times during the entire year. Consequently, many individuals have the opportunity to influence student's cognitive and affective development. Because of the limited time they spend with students, teachers and counselors must work together to develop and implement counseling with students.

The authors realize that our schools are far from perfect in terms of counselors and teachers having enough time to accomplish all that would be desirable and beneficial. Many times we have had teachers tell us that counselors always want to take the students out of class for some activity. Counselors and teachers both get frustrated in these time constraints. In the following examples, we will suggest some ways counselors can work with teachers to address some of the situations that arise with Latino students. It is hoped that these examples will not only help the counselor relate more effectively with Latinos, but also facilitate a more effective working relationship between counselors and teachers for the ultimate benefit of the students.

SOME EXAMPLES OF COUNSELING METHODS FOR LATINO STUDENTS
Using Teacher-Counselor Teams

Situations, Symptoms, & Reasons	Possible Solutions for Elementary Students	Possible Solutions for Secondary Students-Junior & Senior High
1. The Traditional, Field Sensitive, appearantly Passive, Students: Pepe is being questioned about an incident on the playground. Pepe doesn't answer the questions and soon begins to cry. The counselor escorts Pepe to the principle's office, and in private tells the principal, "Pepe never answers my questions he understands what I say, but will not answer. Pepe just lacks respect."	Pepe's parents have taught him that when hs is being reproved, he is not to refute elders and he must lower his head in respect. Pepe is not being disrespectful, he is just practicing his culture. A biaffective counseling method would be to hug Pepe and tell him that the counselor understands and consol him. The team establishes a role playing situation in which Pepe talks freely because he is not being reproved.	The student at this level may not cry, but may exhibit other overt signs such as withdrawal. Any method to consol Pepe will help in this situation. The student can be isolated, or he can be told that he will be reported to his older siblings and/or parents. Encouraging the student to talk in a private non-threatening place, will help encourage openness and understanding. The counseling team must understand the role of the authority

SOME EXAMPLES OF COUNSELING METHODS FOR LATINO STUDENTS
Using Teacher-Counselor Teams

Situations, Symptoms, & Reasons	Possible Solutions for Elementary Students	Possible Solutions for Secondary Students-Junior & Senior High
2. The Traditional and Field Sensitive Student: Alma is a good student, but lately she has been falling asleep in class and not doing her homework. The teacher learns that Alma's uncle and family from Puerto Rico are visiting the family. She sleeps on the floor while sharing her bed with her aunt and uncle and plays with her counsins in the evening. The teacher tells Alma, "It is a shame that you sleep	A bicognitive/biaffective way of handling this could be: "Alma, I understand your situation. I agree that you ought to socialize with your cousins, and I admire you for sharing your bed and sleeping on the floor. Perhaps I can keep you after school to help you complete your homework if your parents don't mind. Do you want me to call them and see if it is alright? There may be things you can do to stay awake in class. In the meantime, lets do our best <u>together</u> until your situation is resolved." Alma is relieved of some	figure in this situation. Very similar methods may be used for secondary students. However, at the secondary level, the traditional student will respect the recommendation of the counseling team to get the homework done at school before going home to a house full of guests. The secondary student will feel more pressure to entertain her cousins because of the family obligation than will younger children. Therefore, it is more important to work out ways at school where she can get her work done. Her school

SOME EXAMPLES OF COUNSELING METHODS FOR LATINO STUDENTS
Using Teacher Counselor Teams

Situations, Symptoms, & Reasons	Possible Solutions for Elementary Students	Possible Solutions for Secondary Students-Junior & Senior High
on the floor and you can't complete your homework. I can't tolerate your situation. Tell your parents to send the guests to a motel so that you will not fail in school. In the meantime, I'm sending you to the counselor's office.	social pressures and the team reinforces the Latino culture.	work is reinforced and so is her familia behavior.
3. Duotraditional and Field Sensitive Student: Some symptoms: This student may be disruptive, antisocial, resentful and sleeping in class. Some reasons may be: 1) student doesn't understand the subject, 2) the subject is abstract, 3) difficulty with	1) The teacher should humanize the abstractions which will help reinforce bicognitive concepts. 2) Students should study content areas in Spanish as they learn English in ESL classes which will help develop bicognition. Placing the student	Same methods will work as for elementary students. In addition at the secondary levels, classes can be more formalized by teaching ethnic studies or classes in communication skills to assist in the biaffective areas.

SOME EXAMPLES OF COUNSELING METHODS FOR LATINO STUDENTS
Using Teacher Counselor Teams

Situations, Symptoms, & Reasons	Possible Solutions for Elementary Students	Possible Solutions for Secondary Students-Junior & Senior High
English, and 4) student may not be accepted by the more "competitive" students because they are cooperative and like to work in group situations.	in a class to learn both Anglo and Latino culture will help to encourage the student to be duotraditional. Learning about two value systems will help the student become biaffective.	Encourage students to participate in school group activities to meet cooperative and belonging needs.
4. The Duo-Traditional and Field Independent Student: Some Symptoms: Truancy, aggression, resentfulness and at times appears to be passive may be some symptoms. Some reasons may be that the student understands a mixture of English and Spanish but not as well as the traditional or atraditional students,	1) Students can be placed in bilingual classes, 2) students are placed in grade commensurate with their age, and 3) students can exchange skills; one group tutors in English and the other group tutors in Spanish.	Points 1, 2 and 3 can be treated the same as in the elementary situation. However, in addition college students could tutor the students needing help in English. This cooperative effort will reinforce bicognitive and biaffective skills in students.

SOME EXAMPLES OF COUNSELING METHODS FOR LATINO STUDENTS
Using Teacher Counselor Teams

Situations, Symptoms, & Reasons	Possible Solutions for Elementary Students	Possible Solutions for Secondary Students-Junior & Senior High
2) student is placed in a lower grade than peers, 3) may not be accepted by atraditional add traditional students.		4) Communication skills could be taught to students to help them become more assertive as opposed to aggressive.
5. Atraditional and Field Sensitive Students: Some Symptoms: This student lives in suburbia, her family speaks English at home, she is barely familiar with Latin food, and she is seen as a Latina by Anglo students and as an Anglo by Latino students. One day she is passive and quiet and the next, loud and aggressive. Some Reasons: Mary is not	These students ought to be taught their identity, and to accept either culture or both via bilingual classes, to aid them in becoming duotraditional, bicognitive and biaffective. The counseling team can assist the student in becoming more assertive and conducting workshops for teachers on the culture of the Latino.	Since bilingual classes are not readily available at the secondary levels, the counseling teams can attempt to develop minority/ Latino studies programs. Counseling teams can also do small group counseling with Latinos to work with identity problems. Counseling teams can also promote activities which will encourage acceptance of multicultural

SOME EXAMPLES OF COUNSELING METHODS FOR LATINO STUDENTS
Using Teacher Counselor Teams

Situations, Symptoms, & Reasons	Possible Solutions for Elementary Students	Possible Solutions for Secondary Students-Junior & Senior High

unique in experiencing an identity problem. There are many Latino students who are unaware of their identity and culture. The students often behave irradically.

backgrounds.

6. Attraditional and Field Independent:

The Situation: John Martinez insists on his name having the emphasis on Martin. He lives in an all white community, and his Anglo mother has much influence on him. He has green eyes, is light complected, does not know a word of Spanish, and is well liked and accepted by

In the elementary school John does not need much counseling and is well liked by everyone. However, the counseling team ought to be aware that one day John may have to face his ethnicity and be prepared for a possible bicultural confrontation.

John ought to have been taught to move from the sixth to the third star (in diagram above) before high school. If he was not, he should be taught this as soon as possible. Parents should be included in this transition to make it less traumatic for all concerned. Helping John to gain acceptance

SOME EXAMPLES OF COUNSELING METHODS FOR LATINO STUDENTS
Using Teacher Counselor Teams

Situations, Symptoms, & Reasons	Possible Solutions for Elementary Students	Possible Solutions for Secondary Students-Junior & Senior High
his peers and other personnel in the all white school. In high school he is transferred to an integrated school and is not accepted by Anglo or Latino students. He is faced with the reality of his ethnicity. His grades drop from above average to average or below. He may be aggressive due to overreacting. He doubts his identity which results in much confusion and resentment.		with his peers will help aleviate some of his confusion. This student will be a prime candidate for dropping out if he does not accept either or both cultural identities.

Conclusion

As stated before, the goal of this model is to facilitate the development in Latino students of the ability to function bicognitively, biaffectively, biculturally and assertively. If these methods are used by counselors, students will have a better opportunity of achieving these goals.

This model can be compared to Maslow's theory of "hierarchy of needs." Maslow has suggested that there are six human needs, which exist in a hierarchy, each of which must be met, before the next one can be achieved. We contend that many Latinos have been unable to achieve "self-actualization", and may never have gotten "loving and belonging" or "esteem needs" met, because of their alienation from the school system.

Through the use of this model, Latinos will have a better chance of reaching "self-actualization" because other needs are met through acceptance of them and their culture. Counselors and teachers only affect students for a short period of time, but through the use of this model, the students will have a better chance of coping with other areas where people are not as knowledgable or accepting.

The authors realize that some of the solutions presented in the above examples may not exist, such as ethnic studies, bicultural/bilingual or English as a second language classes, nor other courses relevant to Latinos. However, we feel that it is imperative that teachers and counselors form teams and develop courses for Latinos that will increase their educational potential. Consequently, we suggest that counseling teams be strong, innovative, and learn about and develop local sources of assistance to ensure the most valuable resource of all - our students!

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Diagram 1

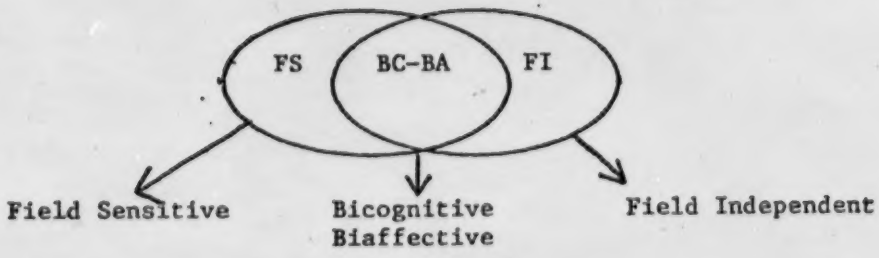
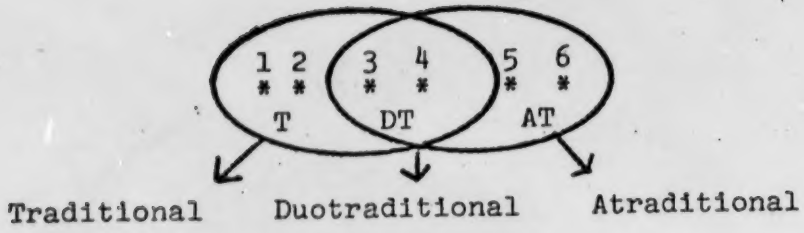

FS
BC-BA
FI
Field Sensitive
Bicognitive
Biaffective
Field Independent

Diagram 2



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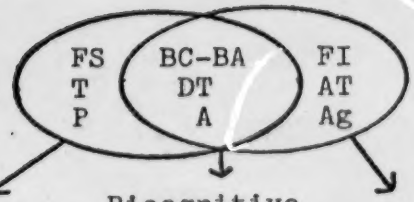

A-	Field Sensitive	Bicognitive Biaffective Duotraditional	Field Independent
B-	Traditional		Atraditional
C-	Passive	Assertive	Aggressive